American Red Cross Presents the 2026 International Humanitarian Law Youth Action Campaign (IHL YAC) National Showcase

The IHL YAC National Showcase is a virtual event intended to share the accomplishments and takeaways from this year's campaign season across all eight divisions of the American Red Cross.

July 24th, 2026, 5-7 p.m. (ET)
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Guest speakers, movie nights, art galleries, and more: across the world, passionate youth advocates spent countless hours organizing events and fostering engagement to spread the word about International Humanitarian Law (IHL). On July 24th, 2026, a select 26 Summit Representatives came together to share their successes, challenges, and takeaways from the year at the IHL YAC National Showcase.

This year's campaign season pushed students to look beyond the general protections established under IHL and toward the specific nuances in play when integrating journalism in armed conflict. Under this year's theme, Journalism in Armed Conflict, advocates organized several creative and uniquely relevant events, some of which were highlighted during the showcase. One especially impressive event, known as Music for Humanity, was held by the advocates in the North Central division before a crowd of 50 attendees. These outstanding students composed and performed an original music arrangement as an audible representation of the importance of protecting journalists in war. Another exemplary event was held by advocates from the Southwest and Rocky Mountains division, who partnered with mental health and humanitarian organizations to raise funds for children affected by armed conflict. Not only did they educate over 500 people during this event, but these inspiring students were also able to raise over $2,000 for donation, transforming IHL into a vehicle for student-led humanitarian aid.

Outside of the United States, the OCONUS division included advocates in Asia and Europe, spreading the importance of IHL and Journalism in Armed Conflict on a global scale. This division emphasized their commitment to taking on creative passion projects, such as a student-directed movie in Yokosuka, Japan. This film followed the life of Ernie Pyle, a WWII war correspondent. They used this form of storytelling to educate others on different types of journalists and how IHL applies differently for each.

At the end of each showcase presentation, division representatives reflected on common challenges and insights garnered at the culmination of the campaign season. One recurring thread was a difficulty in harnessing engagement. In a world with persistent commotion, it can feel disheartening when a long-awaited event has a lower turnout than anticipated. Regardless, many campaigns recognized that, regardless of the number of people in the room, there was always someone listening, and that someone could always walk away with a new piece of information or a newfound urge to take action. One person at a time, one step at a time, is all it takes to gather momentum toward spreading the message of IHL. The students from these divisions have shown what it means to be a strong advocate and have helped pave the way for increased awareness together.

Overall, this year's National IHL YAC Showcase was a tremendous success, sharing the achievements from eight divisions, with a total of over 394,000 people engaged. All students learned something new and expressed their excitement to continue their journey of IHL advocacy, inspiring others to join in along the way.

Warm Regards,
International Humanitarian Law Youth Action Campaign Summit Representatives

SYNOPSIS: The American Red Cross IHL YAC National Showcase on July 24th, 2026, was a virtual webinar that highlighted the events held by Youth Action Campaign advocates across the United States and OCONUS. The Showcase highlighted the most successful activities led by these students, common challenges encountered by teams from each region, and Summit advocates' advice for overcoming these obstacles. Many Summit advocates expressed a strong initiative to expand the breadth of their events for next years' campaigns, especially after having the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from their peers.